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U.K. 35p
CAN. $1.00
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MOON KNIGHT™

# FALLING ON OUR NOSES?

in tai chi chaun, a gentle and wonderful combination of martial arts and exercise, there is a concept called "exploring the limits." this means testing how close you can let an opponent come before he hits you and how far you can extend yourself toward him before you lose your balance and fall on your nose. what you learn is where your body is, its boundaries, and the distance it can be extended and yet retain wholeness and identity.

in Moon Knight we're exploring the limits.

we're asking: what kind of adventures can our hero have and still be his own unique self. (can we do fantasy? science fiction? humor?) how long should stories be? (one per issue? two? three? or should a story extend over a number of issues?) how many liberties can we take with the traditional comic book format? (our black-and-white covers are a solid success. but we're not sure about our other experiments -- putting the title on the inside cover, next issue ads on the back cover, text features, cover galleries and whatever we come up with next.)

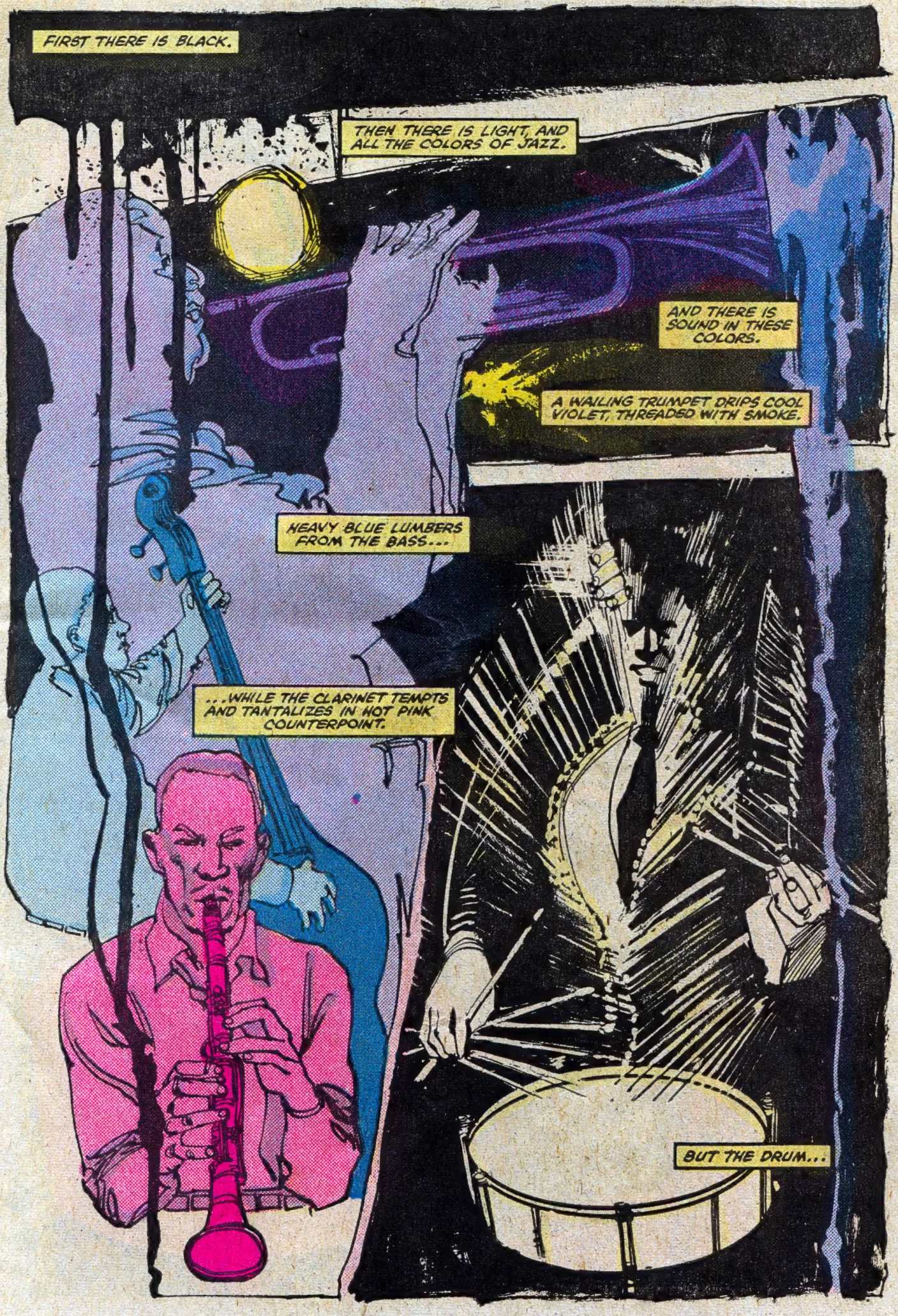
lots of questions. very few answers.

but that's okay. in fact, that's fine. that's what makes working on Moon Knight just about the most exciting job in comics. i've always liked journeys and everyone likes surprises and Moon Knight is both. the magazine -- and character -- are fluid, not fully defined and we're busy exploring the limits.

of course, we may fall on our noses. you'll let us know if we do.

denny o'neil

**MOON KNIGHT™ Vol. 1, No. 26, December, 1982.** (ISSN 0279-3113) Published by MARVEL COMICS GROUP, James E. Galton, President. Stan Lee, Publisher. Michael Hobson, Vice-President, Publishing. Milton Schiffman, Vice-President, Production. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT NEW YORK, N.Y. AND AT ADDITIONAL OFFICES. Published monthly. Copyright©1982 by Marvel Comics Group, a division of Cadence Industries Corporation. All rights reserved. Price 75¢ per copy in the U.S. and $1.00 in Canada. Subscription rate $9.00 for 12 issues. Canada and Foreign, $11.00. Printed in the U.S.A. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the conditions that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. MOON KNIGHT (including all prominent characters featured in the issue), and the distinctive likenesses thereof, are trademarks of the MARVEL COMICS GROUP. Postmaster: Send address changes to Subscription Dept., Marvel Comics Group, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10016.


FIRST THERE IS BLACK.
THEN THERE IS LIGHT, AND ALL THE COLORS OF JAZZ.
AND THERE IS SOUND IN THESE COLORS.
A WAILING TRUMPET DRIPS COOL VIOLET, THREADED WITH SMOKE.
HEAVY BLUE LUMBERS FROM THE BASS...
...WHILE THE CLARINET TEMPTS AND TANTALIZES IN HOT PINK COUNTERPOINT.
BUT THE DRUM...

THE DRUM BEATS BLOOD RED.

STAN LEE PRESENTS:

# HIT IT!

DON'T FIDDLE WITH IT, EDNA-- HIT IT.

ALL RIGHT-- THAT'S THE FINISH-- HIT IT!

HIT IT! HIT IT! HIT IT! HIT IT!

AWRIGHT, LENNY, THE AREA'S CLEARED --HIT IT.

DOUBLE MEANINGS SOMETIMES MULTIPLY.

BUT EVEN AS A TRUMPET SCREAMS THROUGH THE NIGHT...

...THE DRUM STILL BEATS BLOOD RED.

HIT IT, MOON KNIGHT.

THE NIGHT IS HERE, THE MOON IS FULL, AND CAUGHT BETWEEN ONE AND THE OTHER DARK DEEDS WILL PROWL.

HIT IT, MOON KNIGHT. HIT IT.

CATS IN WINDOWS, CRIES FROM THE ALLEY, SHADOWS MIXING, AND MYSTERIES CLOAKED FOR THE KILL.

HIT IT, MOON KNIGHT, HIT IT.

FEAR IN LURKING, MONEY ITCHING TO CHANGE HANDS, TWITCHING, AND ALWAYS, ALWAYS, BLOOD TO BE SPILLED.

IT'S HOT, MOON KNIGHT. AND IT'S DARK AND IT'S NOW--DON'T BE LATE, MOON KNIGHT, NOT FOR YOUR TIME TO HOWL...

IT MIGHT BE IN RAGE OR IT MIGHT BE IN PAIN...BUT NEVER FEAR, MOON KNIGHT, IT'S ALWAYS THE SAME.

JUST HIT IT, MOON KNIGHT...

# HIT IT!

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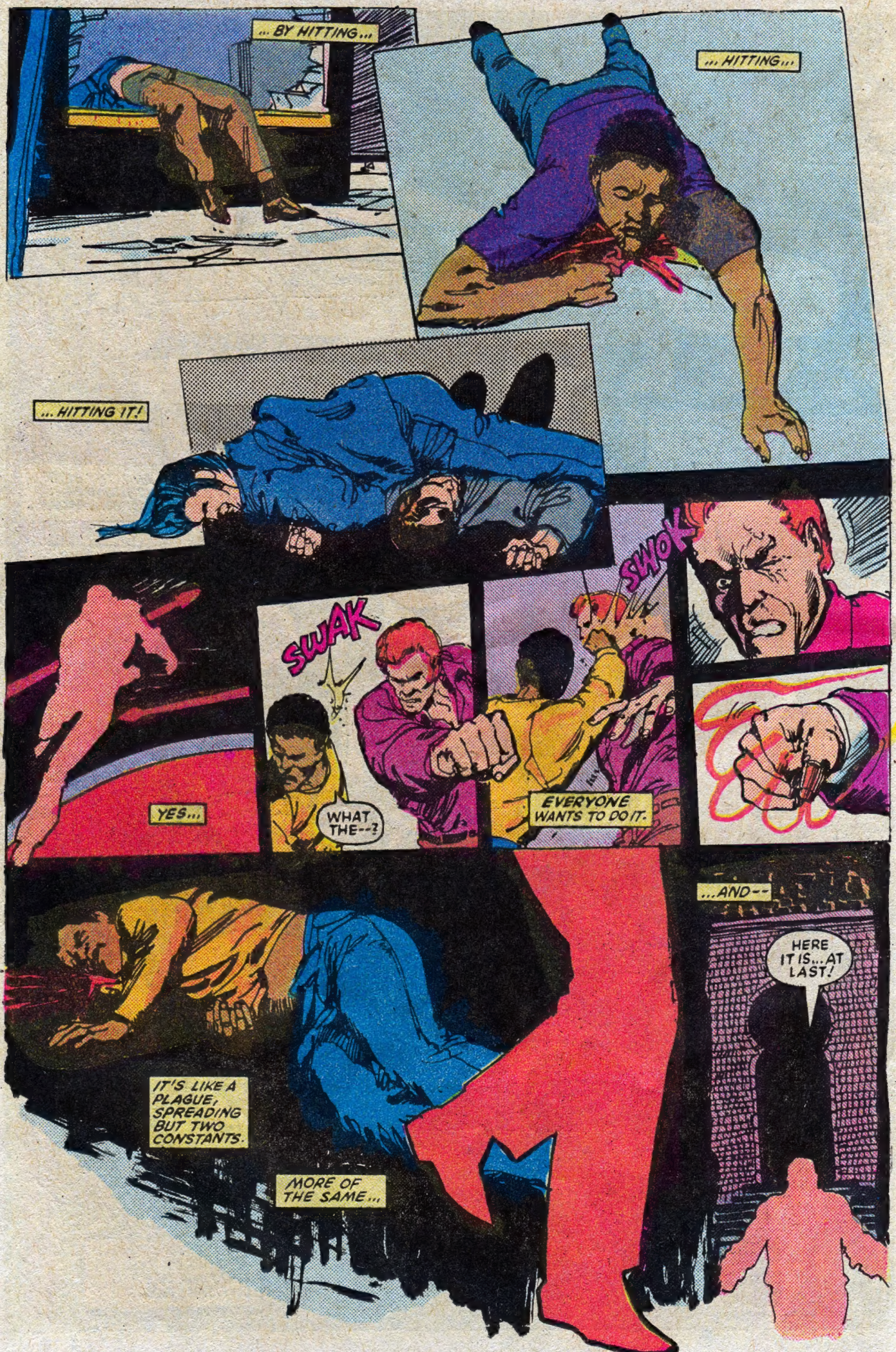
WHADDAYA SAY, JOE? READY FOR ANOTHER TOUR OF THE GRAVE-YARD SHIFT, EH?
Y'AST ME, THEY OUGHTTA PAY US ONE-TO-NINERS *TRIPLE* OVERTIME FOR THIS NIGHT SHIFT--RIGHT, JOE?
JOE...?
OH... NO...!
NO...
NOOOOO
WHAT THE--? WHAT'D I SAY? WHAT'S WITH *JOE?*
I DUNNO-- WHAT WAS HE READIN'?

OBITUARIES
HMP.
THE OBITS.
NO!
NOT NOW...
NOT NOW--!
STILL THE TRUMPET WAILS, PACKING THEM IN...
...LONG PAST THE CAPACITY OF STANDING ROOM ONLY, MOBBING THEM OUT ON THE SIDEWALK...
ONE WAY
...CHOKING OFF THE SHORTEST DISTANCE BETWEEN TWO POINTS.
OUT OF MY WAY-- LET ME THROUGH!
HIT IT, MAESTRO...
HIT IT!

HIT IT, DADDY COOL...
HIT IT!
HE... HE HIT ME... FOR NO REASON...
"...JUST HIT ME...
HEY-- SOMEBODY STOP THAT GUY! HIT HIM
HE'S CRAZY!
OUTTA MY WAY!
I GOTTA GET THROUGH!

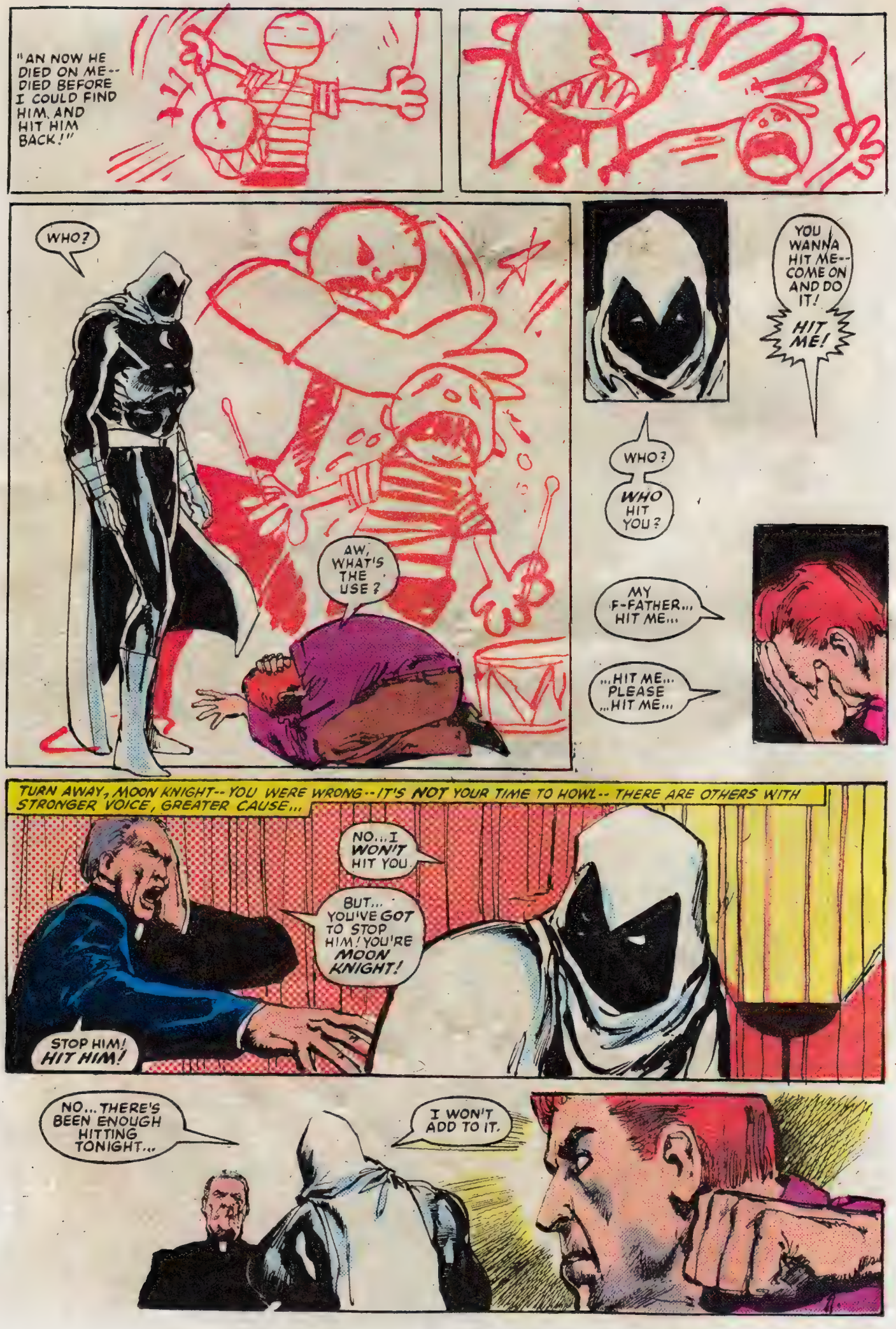
ALL THAT COMMOTION UP THERE-- LOOKS LIKE A RIOT OUTSIDE THE MUSIC CLUBS...
I'D BETTER HIT IT!
JUST DOWN THE STREET THE COLORS ARE WILDER--NEON SHRIEKS WITHOUT MERCY...
AND THE BEAT IS YOUNGER, FASTER, HARDER...
POUNDING, DRIVING, RELENTLESSLY SLAMMING...
EVERYBODY IS DOING IT THESE DAYS, GETTING GREAT SATISFACTION...

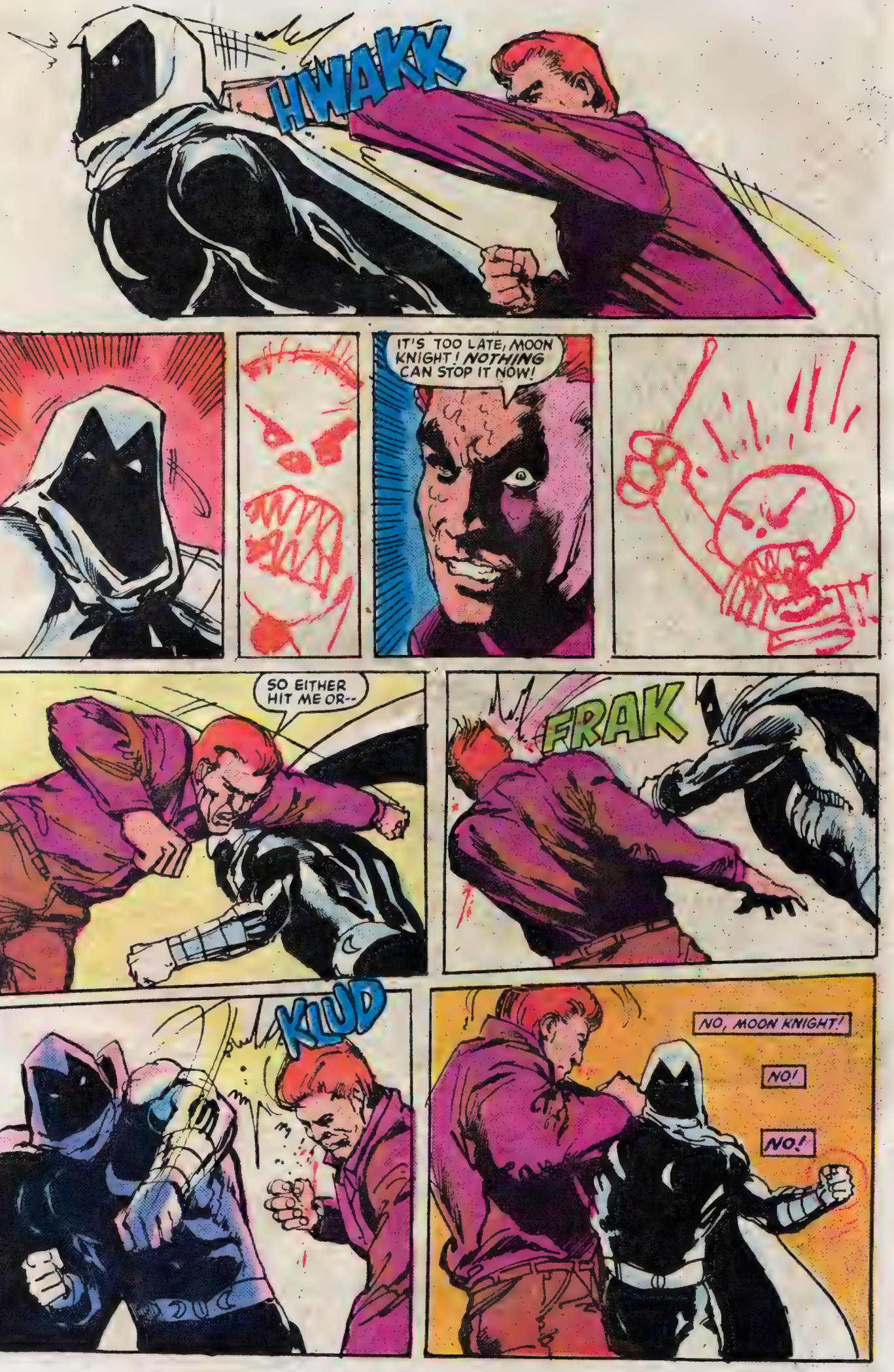

...BY HITTING...
...HITTING...
...HITTING IT!
SWAK
SWOK
YES...
WHAT THE--?
EVERYONE WANTS TO DO IT.
...AND--
HERE IT IS...AT LAST!
IT'S LIKE A PLAGUE, SPREADING BUT TWO CONSTANTS.
MORE OF THE SAME...

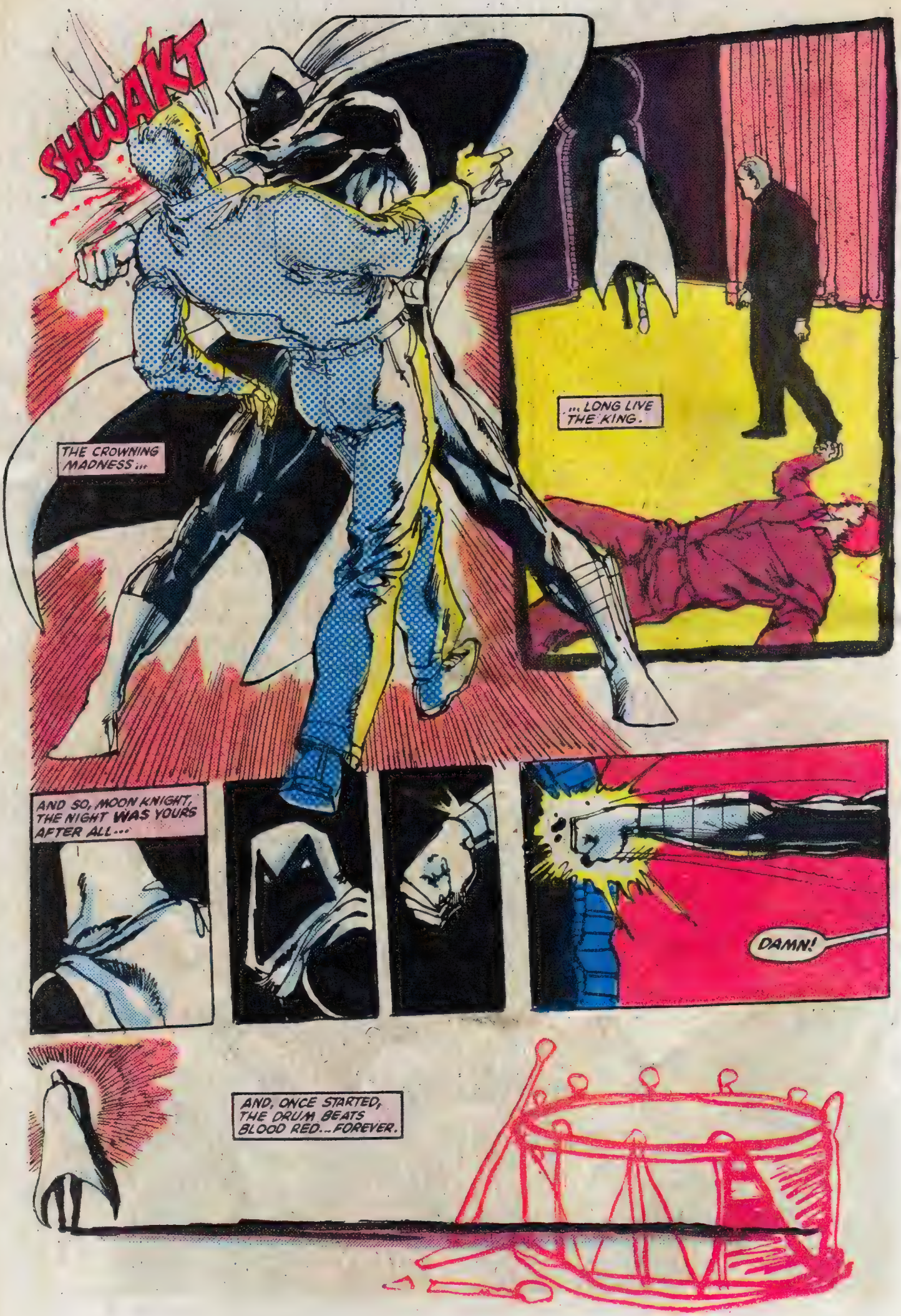
... THE FUNERAL PARLOR!
I'M COMING OLD MAN!
COMING TO PAY MY RESPECTS.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
WE'RE CLOSED FOR THE NIGHT.
YOU CAN'T--
BLAM

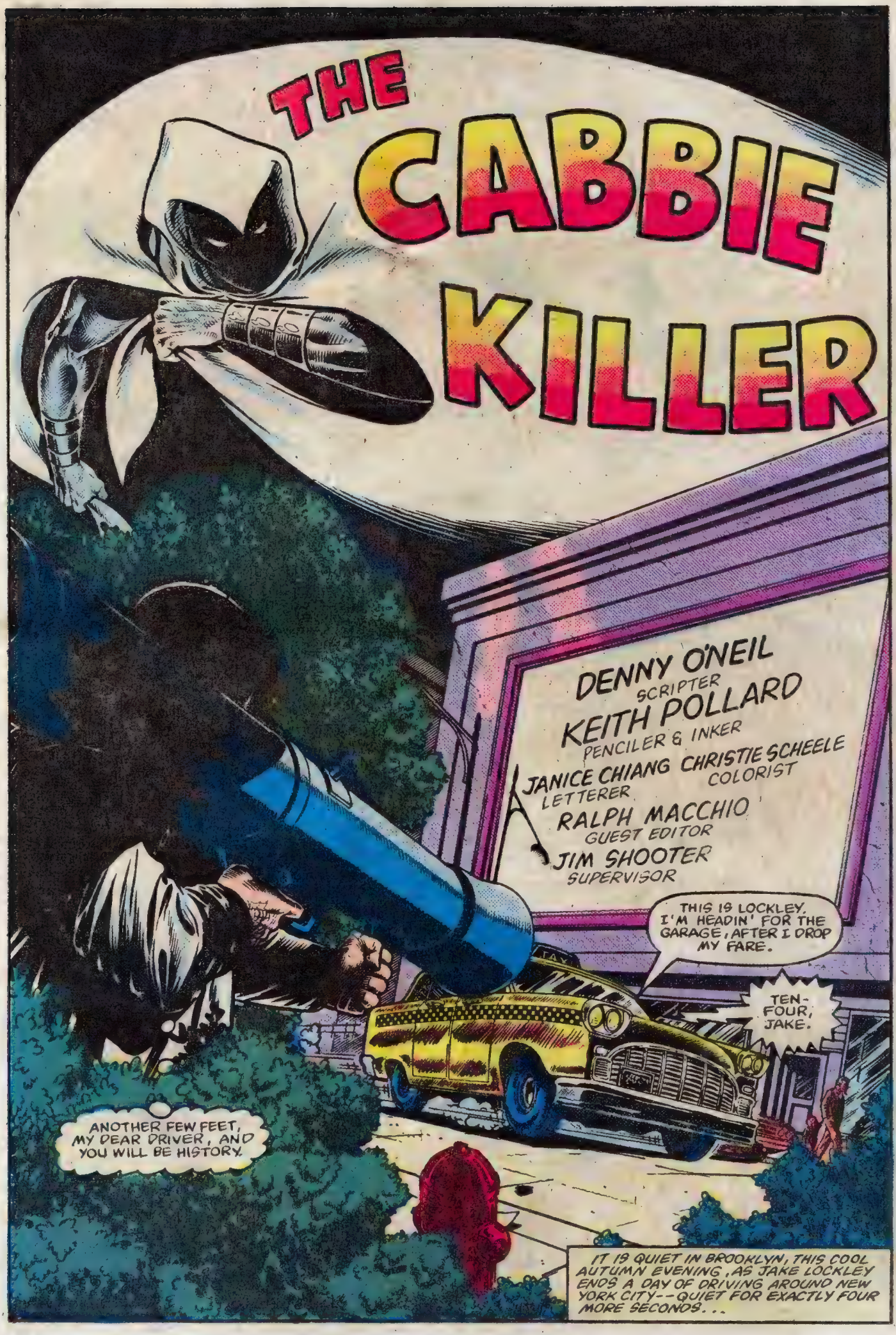
NOW... I CAN PAY MY RESPECTS...
...PAY YOU BACK...
...BUT IT'S NOT FAIR!
AFTER ALL THESE YEARS!
IT'S JUST NOT FAIR I TELL YOU!
YOU... YOU DIED ON ME... BEFORE I COULD PAY YOU BACK... FOR ALL THE THINGS YOU DID FOR ME!
...FOR ALL THE TIMES YOU--
THAT'S ENOUGH.
I'VE FOLLOWED A TRAIL OF BLOOD AND BATTERED FLESH TO FIND YOU HERE.
WHY?
MOON KNIGHT! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
DID YOU COME TO HIT ME TOO?

BLOOD RED...
WELL, COME ON THEN -- HIT ME!
HIT ME TILL YOUR ARMS FALL OFF!
...THE BEAT NEVER ENDS...
YOU MIGHT AS WELL...
HE DID IT OFTEN ENOUGH! HE HIT ME TILL I COULDN'T SLEEP AT NIGHT -- ANY NIGHT!
AND THEN HE HIT ME SOME MORE! AND THEN HE RAN AWAY -- LEFT MY MOTHER ALONE! FINALLY HE WOULDN'T HIT ME ANYMORE! FINALLY HE WOULDN'T EVEN GIVE ME THAT!
PAIN, CATHARSIS, RAGE -- THEY SHRIEK THROUGH NIGHTS LOST TO TIME...


"AN NOW HE DIED ON ME-- DIED BEFORE I COULD FIND HIM, AND HIT HIM BACK!"
WHO?
AW, WHAT'S THE USE?
YOU WANNA HIT ME-- COME ON AND DO IT! HIT ME!
WHO? WHO HIT YOU?
MY F-FATHER... HIT ME...
...HIT ME... PLEASE ...HIT ME...
TURN AWAY, MOON KNIGHT-- YOU WERE WRONG-- IT'S NOT YOUR TIME TO HOWL-- THERE ARE OTHERS WITH STRONGER VOICE, GREATER CAUSE...
NO...I WON'T HIT YOU
BUT... YOU'VE GOT TO STOP HIM! YOU'RE MOON KNIGHT!
STOP HIM! HIT HIM!
NO... THERE'S BEEN ENOUGH HITTING TONIGHT...
I WON'T ADD TO IT.


HWAKK
IT'S TOO LATE, MOON KNIGHT! NOTHING CAN STOP IT NOW!
SO EITHER HIT ME OR--
FRAK
KLUD
NO, MOON KNIGHT!
NO!
NO!


SHWAKT
THE CROWNING MADNESS...
...LONG LIVE THE KING.
AND SO, MOON KNIGHT, THE NIGHT WAS YOURS AFTER ALL...
DAMN!
AND, ONCE STARTED, THE DRUM BEATS BLOOD RED...FOREVER.


THE CABBIE KILLER
DENNY O'NEIL
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LETTERER
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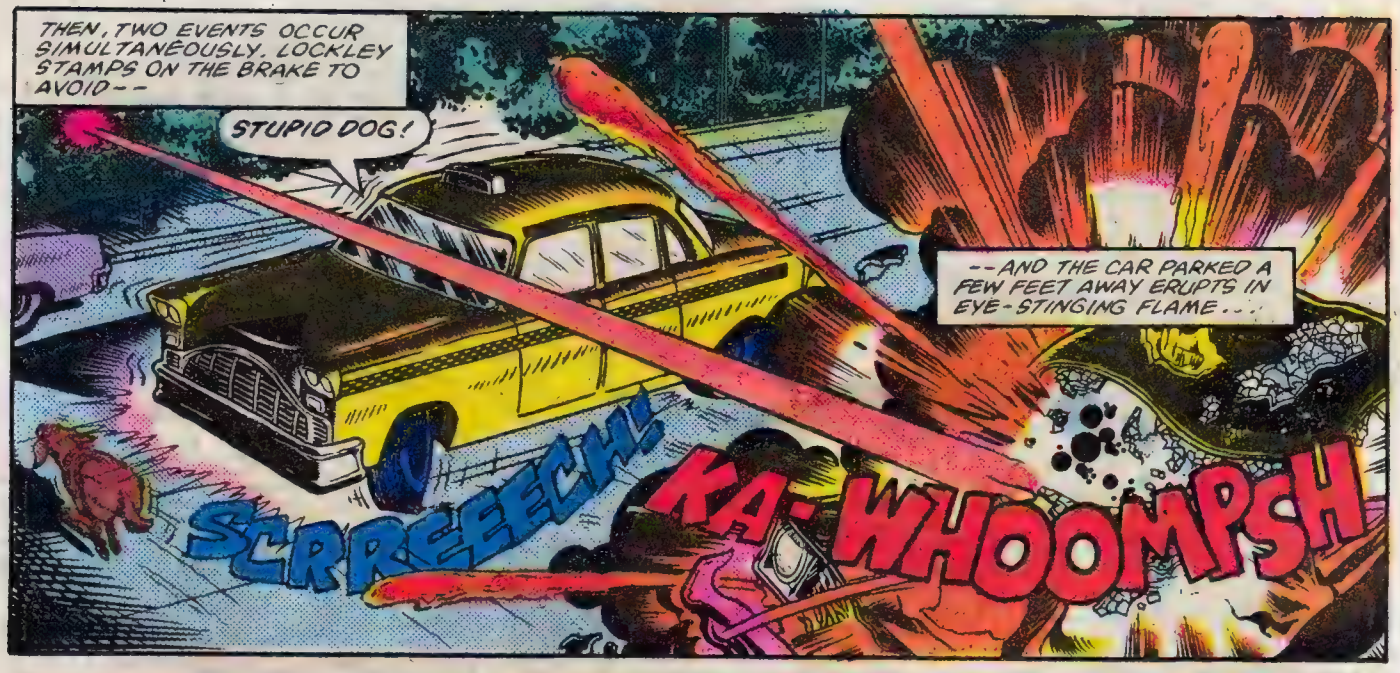
COLORIST
RALPH MACCHIO
GUEST EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER
SUPERVISOR
THIS IS LOCKLEY. I'M HEADIN' FOR THE GARAGE, AFTER I DROP MY FARE.
TEN-FOUR, JAKE.
ANOTHER FEW FEET, MY DEAR DRIVER, AND YOU WILL BE HISTORY.
IT IS QUIET IN BROOKLYN, THIS COOL AUTUMN EVENING, AS JAKE LOCKLEY ENDS A DAY OF DRIVING AROUND NEW YORK CITY--QUIET FOR EXACTLY FOUR MORE SECONDS...


THEN, TWO EVENTS OCCUR SIMULTANEOUSLY. LOCKLEY STAMPS ON THE BRAKE TO AVOID--
STUPID DOG!
--AND THE CAR PARKED A FEW FEET AWAY ERUPTS IN EYE-STINGING FLAME...
SCRREEECH!
KA-WHOOMPSH

WAS IT AN ACCIDENT? A BOMB?
NEITHER. JUST BEFORE THE FIREWORKS, I GLIMPSED A MUZZLE FLASH FROM THE BUSHES. WEIRD AS IT SEEMS--

--SOMEBODY SHOT OFF AN OLD-FASHIONED BAZOOKA!
THE THING THAT BUGS ME IS, IT LOOKED LIKE WE WERE THE TARGET.
YOU GOT ANY ENEMIES, MISTER?
NOT THAT KIND OF ENEMY--

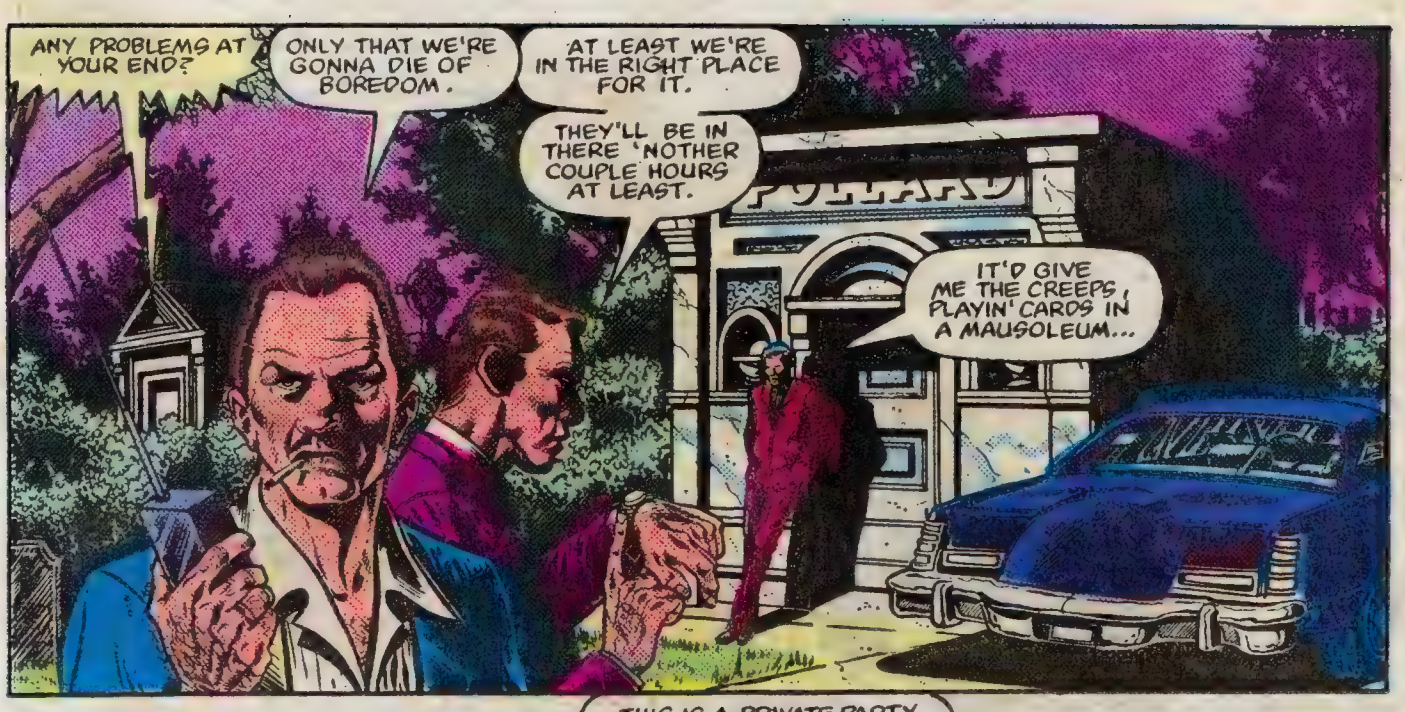
--AND IN CASE YOU HAVE, I THINK I'LL WALK THE REST OF THE WAY.
KEEP THE CHANGE. YOU MAY NEED IT.

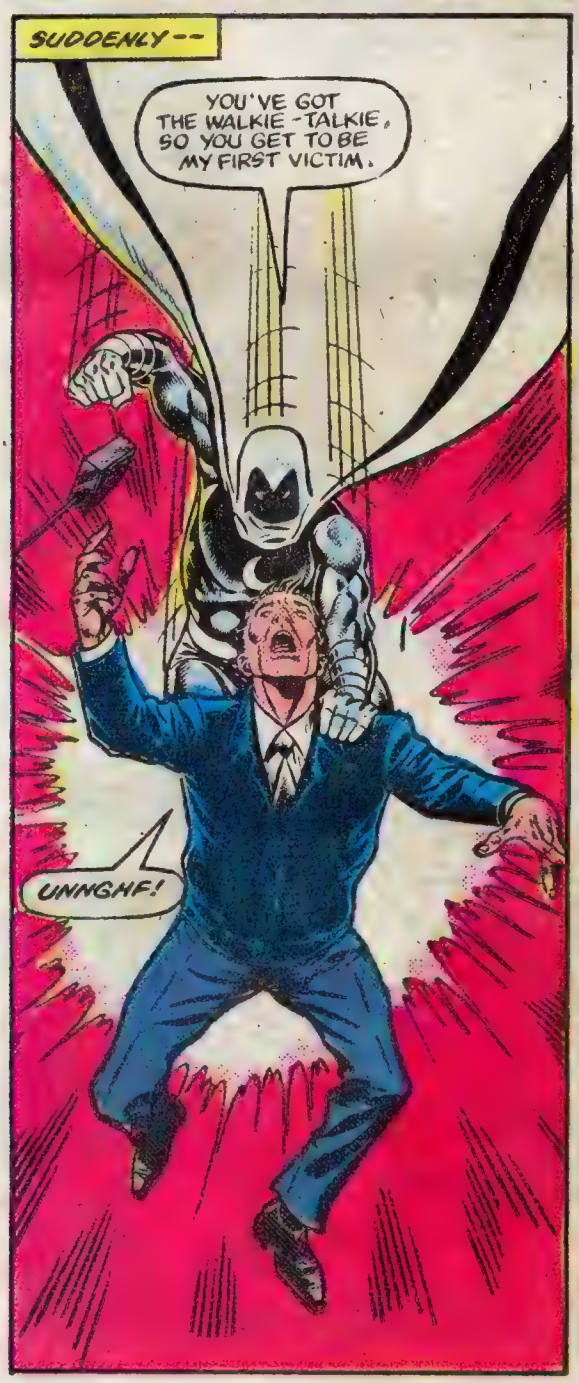
AN HOUR LATER, AT A PIER SOMEWHERE IN LOWER MANHATTAN...
... SO, DEAR SIR, THE HAPPENSTANCE OF THE ERRANT POOCH PREVENTED ME FROM COMPLETING THE MISSION YOU GAVE ME. I GUARANTEE SUCCESS ON MY SECOND ATTEMPT.
THERE AIN'T GONNA BE NO SECOND TRY, ACE. TAKE A HIKE.

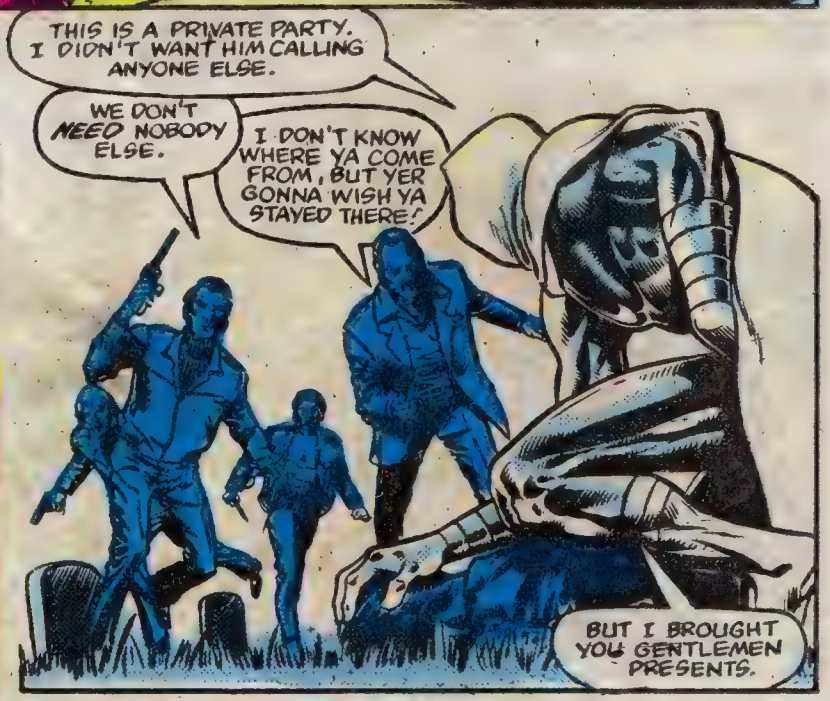
NOT TRUE, SIR! YOU HAVE HIRED ME TO DESTROY A TAXI CAB AND SO I SHALL-- WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT.
I GAVE MY WORD--AND COMMODORE DONNY PLANET ALWAYS KEEPS HIS WORD. UNDERSTOOD?
Y-YEAH.

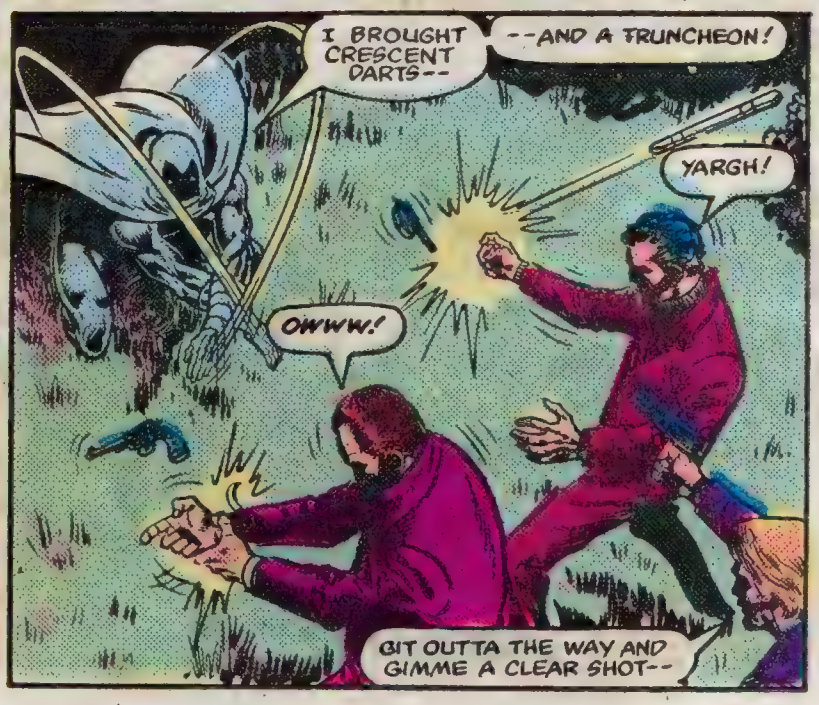
MEANWHILE, AT GRANT MANSION, ON LONG ISLAND...
IS THAT YOU, STEVEN?
NO, DOLL! IT'S ME-- JAKE LOCKLEY--
-- BUT I'LL BE GRANT AS SOON AS I SHED JAKE'S MOUSTACHE AND CLOTHING!
I WISH I FOUND YOUR CHANGING IDENTITIES AS AMUSING AS YOU DO.
JOIN ME BY THE POOL--
--I NEED TO EXERCISE AND COOL OFF... AND WE HAVE A PROBLEM TO DISCUSS...
PROBLEM, STEVEN?
SOMEBODY TOOK A SHOT AT LOCKLEY'S CAB, MARLENE-- WITH A BAZOOKA.
YOU 'AD AN UNPOPULAR PASSENGER, MONSIEUR STEVEN? ZE MAYOR, PERHAPS? OR ZEY WERE SHOOTING AT YOU?
I DON'T KNOW, FRENCHIE, BUT WE'RE GOING TO FIND OUT.
OR SHOULD I SAY, YOU AND MOON KNIGHT ARE GOING TO FIND OUT. TONIGHT.
ZE CHOPPER WILL BE READY WITHIN FIFTEEN MINUTES.
I SUPPOSE THIS IS NECESSARY, STEVEN.
I WISH IT WEREN'T, MARLENE.
AND, ON THE ROOFTOP HELIPORT...
FIRST STOP IS THE BROOKLYN TAXICAB GARAGE, FRENCHIE.
AND THEN?
THAT DEPENDS, POSSIBLY QUEENS.
MONSIEUR MOON KNIGHT-- DOWN BELOW...

I SEE. SOMETHING BURNING AT STREET LEVEL. I HAVE A TERRIBLE FEELING I KNOW WHAT. BETTER GO IN FOR A CLOSER LOOK
ITS A CAB, THIS TIME THE BAZOOKA ARTIST DIDN'T MISS.
NO POINT IN STICKING AROUND, FRENCHIE. THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO--
--AND MY QUESTION IS ANSWERED. JAKE LOCKLEY ISN'T THE ONLY TARGET.
SKIP THE GARAGE AND HEAD STRAIGHT FOR QUEENS CEMETARY.
ZE GRAVEYARD?
FOR MONTHS, I'VE KNOWN THAT A LOT OF OUR LOCAL CRIMINAL TYPES PLAY POKER THERE EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT... THEY FIGURE THEY WON'T BE DISTURBED.
MAYBE ONE OF THEM WILL HAVE SOME ANSWERS FOR US.
I SHOULD LAND NEARBY?
PICK UP LOCKLEY'S CAB AND PARK IT NEAR THE NORTH GATE. I'LL TRY TO STAY IN TOUCH BY RADIO.
OUI. BON CHANCE.
SILENT AS THE CHOPPER IS, IT ISN'T AS QUIET AS MY GLIDER CAPE. AND I WANT MY LITTLE VISIT TO BE A COMPLETE SURPRISE.
I CAN SEE THE GLOW OF CIGARETTES BELOW... PROBABLY SENTRIES.


ANY PROBLEMS AT YOUR END?
ONLY THAT WE'RE GONNA DIE OF BOREDOM.
AT LEAST WE'RE IN THE RIGHT PLACE FOR IT.
THEY'LL BE IN THERE 'NOTHER COUPLE HOURS AT LEAST.
IT'D GIVE ME THE CREEPS, PLAYIN' CARDS IN A MAUSOLEUM...

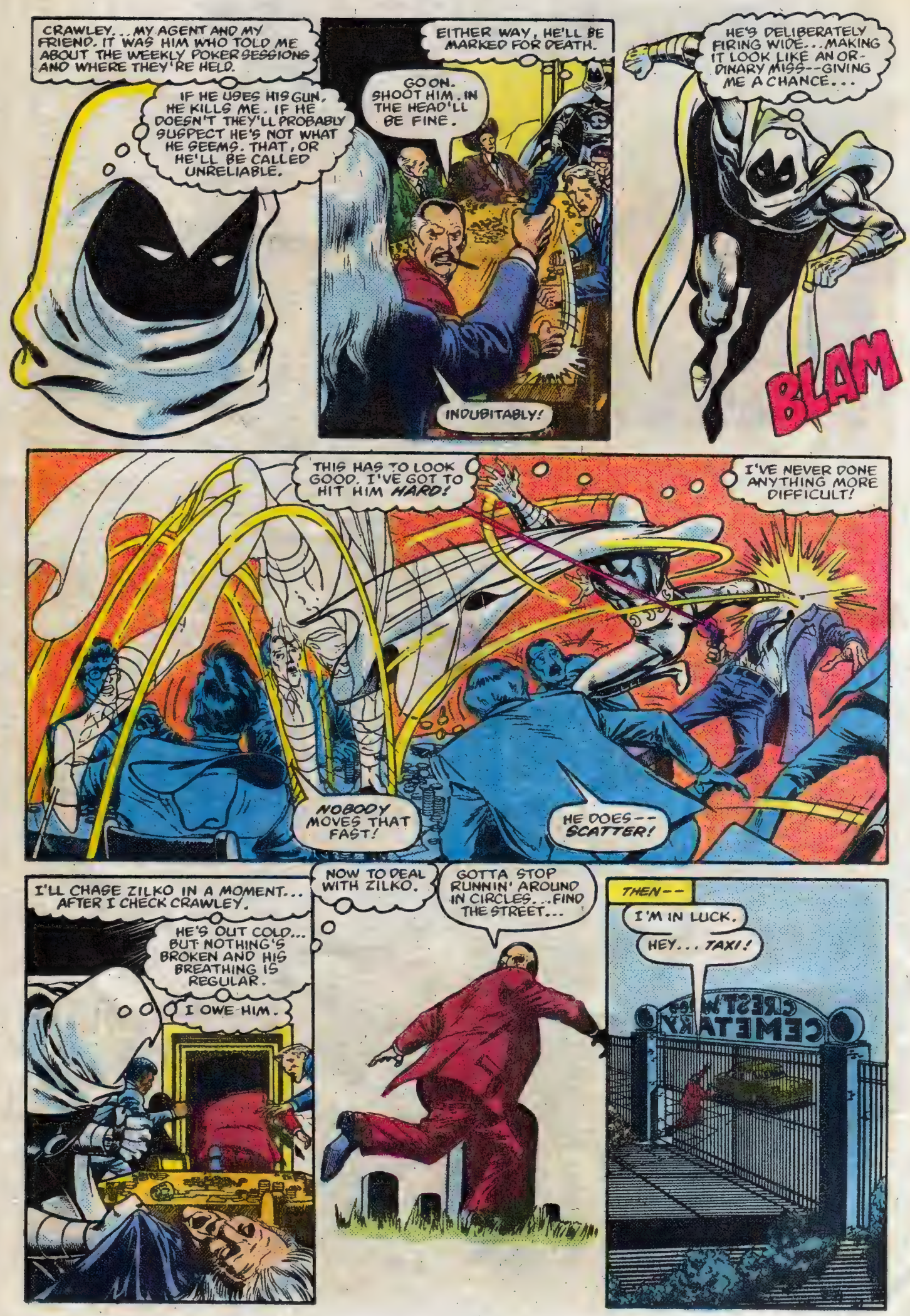

SUDDENLY--
YOU'VE GOT THE WALKIE-TALKIE, SO YOU GET TO BE MY FIRST VICTIM.
UNNGHF!


THIS IS A PRIVATE PARTY. I DIDN'T WANT HIM CALLING ANYONE ELSE.
WE DON'T NEED NOBODY ELSE.
I DON'T KNOW WHERE YA COME FROM, BUT YER GONNA WISH YA STAYED THERE!
BUT I BROUGHT YOU GENTLEMEN PRESENTS.

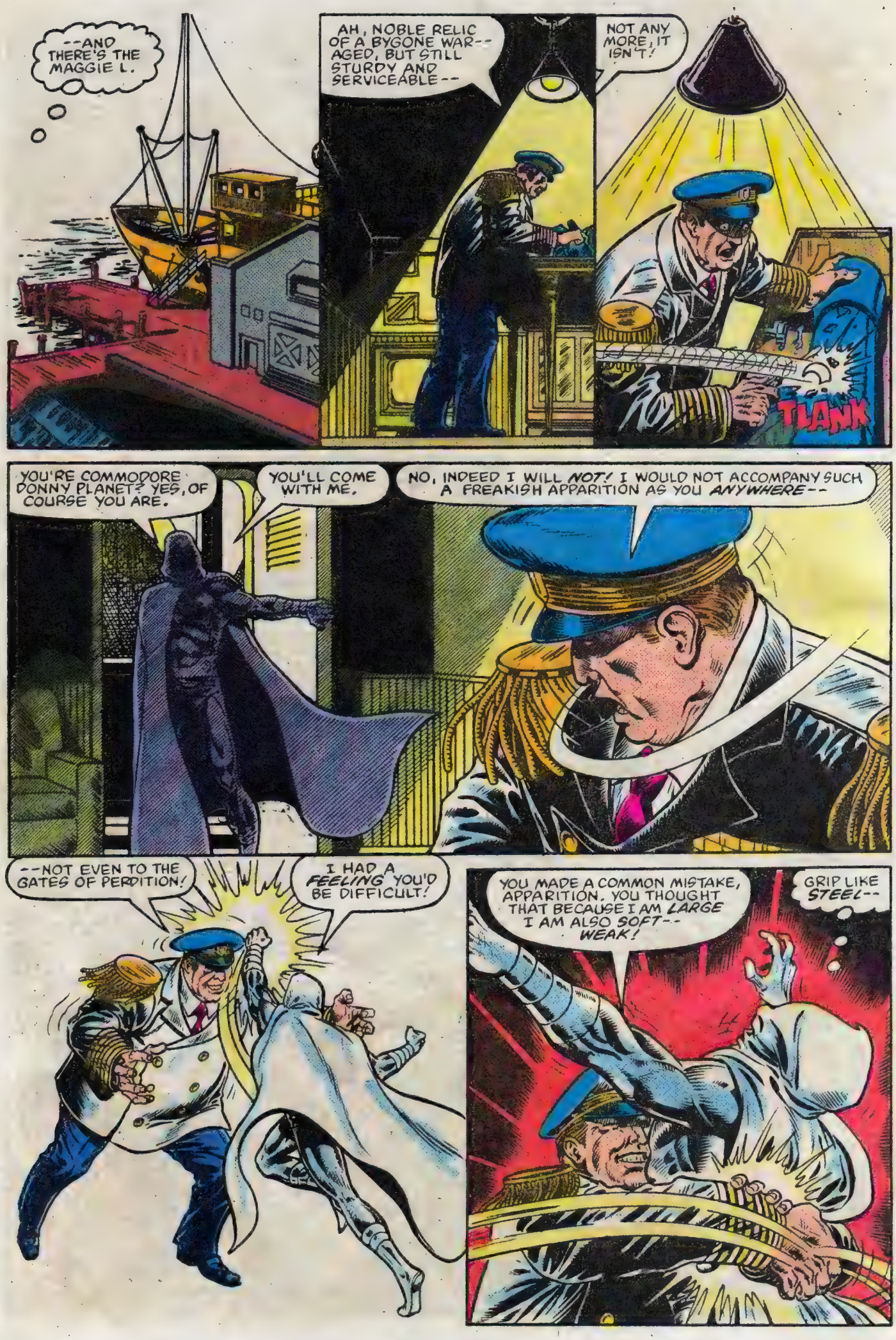

I BROUGHT CRESCENT DARTS--
--AND A TRUNCHEON!
YARGH!
OWWW!
GIT OUTTA THE WAY AND GIMME A CLEAR SHOT--

MGHF!
OKAY, I'M THROUGH PLAYING WITH YOU. I HAVEN'T HURT ANYONE. NOT BADLY. NOT YET.
I SUGGEST YOU START RUNNING. FAST AND FAR.
W-WE CAN'T. THE BOSS'LL SKIN US ALIVE...
BESIDES THERE'S THREE OF US--
A FEW SECONDS AGO THERE WERE FOUR.
BUT I GUESS YOU HAVE TO TRY, DON'T YOU?
NOW THERE'S JUST ONE... YOU. AND YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BE SMART EITHER.
UNGH!
NOT AS MUCH HASSLE AS I EXPECTED. MAYBE THE REST WILL BE EASY, TOO.
I'LL KNOW WHEN I GET INSIDE THAT CRYPT!

DEAL 'EM, WILLYA?
YA'LL GIT WHUT'S A'COMIN TA YUH. HOLD YUH HOSSES!
I HATE TO INTERRUPT THE GAME--
WHO THE--?
MOON KNIGHT!
LET'S MAKE THIS BRIEF. SOMEBODY'S BLOWING UP TAXI CABS. I SUSPECT ONE OF YOU CAN TELL ME ABOUT IT.
YEAH, I CAN. BUT IT AIN'T GONNA DO YOU ANY GOOD, MASKED MAN.
YOU'RE MANNY ZILKO. ALL RIGHT, ZILKO, KEEP TALKING.
ONE OF MY BOYS WAS RUNNIN' FROM THE LAW... DUCKED INTO A GARAGE--
--AND HID A CERTAIN TAPE CASSETTE THE COPS WANT IN A CAB. HE TOLD US THAT MUCH BEFORE HE DIED FROM A SLUG IN THE CHEST.
PROBLEM WAS, HE DIDN'T SAY WHICH CAB. OR WHERE IN THE CAB HE HID IT.
BUT WE FOUND OUT IT HAD TO BE ONE OF THE THREE THAT WERE BEING REPAIRED THAT NIGHT. SO I HIRED A SPECIALIST TO PUT ALL THREE OUTTA COMMISSION--PERMANENTLY.
YOU AIN'T GONNA DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT, THOUGH--
'CAUSE YOU AIN'T GITTIN' OUTTA HERE ALIVE. CRAWLEY, HERE, DOES MORE'N DEAL CARDS. HE CARRIES THE HEAT... 'CAUSE WE ALL TRUST 'IM.

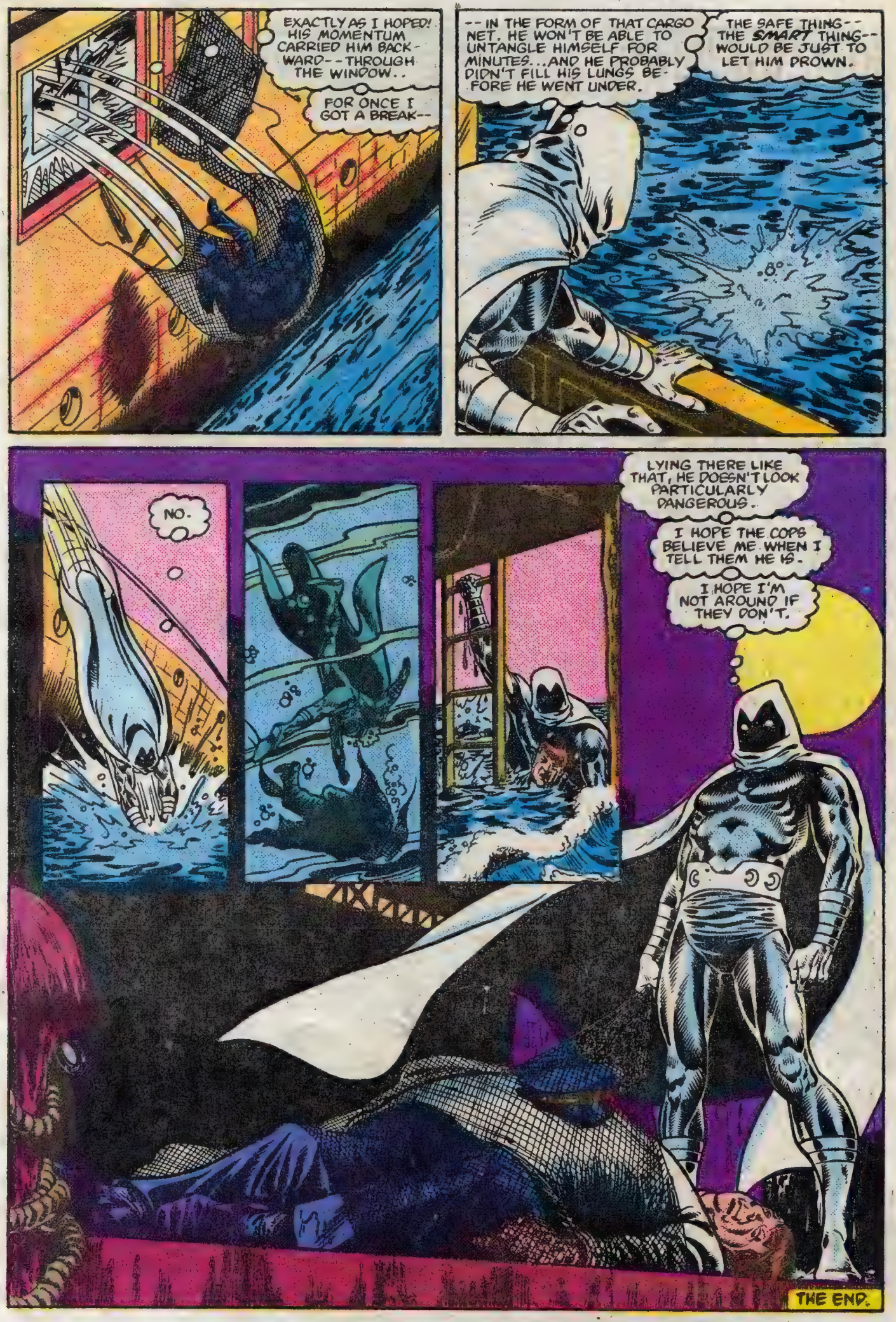

CRAWLEY...MY AGENT AND MY FRIEND. IT WAS HIM WHO TOLD ME ABOUT THE WEEKLY POKER SESSIONS AND WHERE THEY'RE HELD.
IF HE USES HIS GUN, HE KILLS ME. IF HE DOESN'T THEY'LL PROBABLY SUSPECT HE'S NOT WHAT HE SEEMS. THAT, OR HE'LL BE CALLED UNRELIABLE.
EITHER WAY, HE'LL BE MARKED FOR DEATH.
GO ON. SHOOT HIM. IN THE HEAD'LL BE FINE.
INDUBITABLY!
HE'S DELIBERATELY FIRING WIDE...MAKING IT LOOK LIKE AN ORDINARY MISS--GIVING ME A CHANCE...
BLAM
THIS HAS TO LOOK GOOD. I'VE GOT TO HIT HIM HARD!
I'VE NEVER DONE ANYTHING MORE DIFFICULT!
NOBODY MOVES THAT FAST!
HE DOES-- SCATTER!
I'LL CHASE ZILKO IN A MOMENT... AFTER I CHECK CRAWLEY.
HE'S OUT COLD... BUT NOTHING'S BROKEN AND HIS BREATHING IS REGULAR.
I OWE HIM.
NOW TO DEAL WITH ZILKO.
GOTTA STOP RUNNIN' AROUND IN CIRCLES...FIND THE STREET...
THEN--
I'M IN LUCK.
HEY... TAXI!
CEMETARY

TAXI
MANHATTAN, BUDDY. AND DON'T SPARE THE HORSES.
MANHATTAN'S NICE, MR. ZILKO, BUT I THINK I'LL DRIVE TO BROOKLYN... TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF A CERTAIN GARAGE.
IF I WERE LOOKING FOR A CERTAIN CAB AND I KNEW IT WENT TO THIS CERTAIN GARAGE FOR GAS AND REPAIRS, THAT'S WHERE I'D HIDE.
THAT IS WHERE YOUR KILLER IS HIDING, ISN'T IT? WITH HIS BAZOOKA?
MOON KNIGHT!
LEMME OUT!
SAVE YOUR STRENGTH. THE DOOR WON'T OPEN UNLESS I OPEN IT--
--OR UNLESS IT'S BLOWN OPEN BY AN EXPLODING SHELL.
YOU'VE GOT A CHOICE: EITHER TELL ME WHERE TO FIND YOUR ASSASSIN OR WE CRUISE 'ROUND AND 'ROUND TILL HE FINDS US!
MIGHT TAKE ALL NIGHT--
--BUT I'M IN NO HURRY.
H-HE'S AT PIER 104... THE FISHING BOAT MAGGIE L... BE LEAVIN' TO THE JOB IN 10 MINUTES... NAME'S COMMODORE DONNY PLANET...
PRECISELY 18 MINUTES LATER...
I DIDN'T LIKE PUNCHING ZILKO OUT, ESPECIALLY SINCE HE WAS ALMOST DEFENSELESS, BUT I COULDN'T RISK HIS INTERFERING.
THERE'S THE PIER--


--AND THERE'S THE MAGGIE L.
AH, NOBLE RELIC OF A BYGONE WAR-- AGED, BUT STILL STURDY AND SERVICEABLE--
NOT ANY MORE, IT ISN'T!
TLANK
YOU'RE COMMODORE DONNY PLANET? YES, OF COURSE YOU ARE.
YOU'LL COME WITH ME.
NO, INDEED I WILL NOT! I WOULD NOT ACCOMPANY SUCH A FREAKISH APPARITION AS YOU ANYWHERE--
--NOT EVEN TO THE GATES OF PERDITION!
I HAD A FEELING YOU'D BE DIFFICULT!
YOU MADE A COMMON MISTAKE, APPARITION. YOU THOUGHT THAT BECAUSE I AM LARGE I AM ALSO SOFT-- WEAK!
GRIP LIKE STEEL--

YEARS BACK, I WAS SUBJECTED TO AN EXPERIMENT WHICH GREATLY INCREASED BOTH MY STRENGTH AND MY DURABILITY!
A FACT YOU CAN NOW TESTIFY TO, EH?
I'LL BET THEY DIDN'T STRENGTHEN YOUR EARDRUMS--
OWWWW!
YOU STRUCK AT MY SINGLE WEAK POINT. YOU WILL NOT HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO REPEAT SUCH AN ATTACK!
YOU WILL DIE UGLY!
ANY OTHER MAN WOULD BE UNCONSCIOUS... WITH A CONCUSSION--!
CHEST AND BELLY ARE ON FIRE!
YOU ELUDE ME. BUT CAN YOU CONTINUE TO ELUDE ME?
LONG ENOUGH TO DO--
--THIS!
A SPLENDID BLOW--
--HOWEVER, AS I MENTIONED, I AM VIRTUALLY INVULNERABLE!
YOU CANNOT SAY THE SAME.
MGFF!

AH, THE APPARITION HAS A VERY HUMAN SKULL-- WHICH I SHALL CRUSH LIKE AN EGG SHELL!
HE'S IMMENSELY POWERFUL...BUT HE'S AWKWARD, UNCENTERED--
--HE CAN'T MAINTAIN HIS BALANCE... A PERFECT POSITION FOR A JUDO THROW!
IF HE GETS ANOTHER SOLID SHOT AT ME, I'M FINISHED!
I CAN'T LET HIM GET TO HIS FEET... GET SET.
MY TIMING HAS TO BE PERFECT--
NOW, WHEN HE'S HALF WAY UP... WHILE HIS TREMENDOUS WEIGHT IS UNEVENLY DISTRIBUTED...
KA-WHAM!


EXACTLY AS I HOPED! HIS MOMENTUM CARRIED HIM BACKWARD--THROUGH THE WINDOW..
FOR ONCE I GOT A BREAK--
--IN THE FORM OF THAT CARGO NET. HE WON'T BE ABLE TO UNTANGLE HIMSELF FOR MINUTES...AND HE PROBABLY DIDN'T FILL HIS LUNGS BEFORE HE WENT UNDER.
THE SAFE THING--THE SMART THING--WOULD BE JUST TO LET HIM DROWN.
NO.
LYING THERE LIKE THAT, HE DOESN'T LOOK PARTICULARLY DANGEROUS.
I HOPE THE COPS BELIEVE ME WHEN I TELL THEM HE IS.
I HOPE I'M NOT AROUND IF THEY DON'T.
THE END.

# KNIGHT MAIL

MARVEL COMICS GROUP
387 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10016

DENNIS O'NEIL
EDITOR
RALPH MACCHIO
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Dear moon men,

A horrible thought crossed my mind a few moments before I sat down to write this, "What if they stopped making MOON KNIGHT?" I hope this is the farthest thing from your minds, because if it isn't, I'll have to come personally and chain myself to Jim's or Denny's desk until MK is back on the stands again! The thing that makes your mag great is your innovativeness — like the black-and-white covers, the preview of the next issue on the back cover, etc. I could go on and on, but you get the point.

Love it!

James Currier
88 Stowell Road
Merrimack, NH 03054

Dear Doug,

Had to write on MOON KNIGHT #'s 22 and 23. The story and art, as usual; excellent. Robert Markham turned rather quickly into a very interesting and terrifying nemesis. I hope he will somehow show up again in a year or so.

What really piqued my interest was your brief mentioning of the neural transmitters norepinephrine and seorotonin. I work for a pharmaceutical company that makes an anti-depressant that treats depression by blocking the re-uptake of these two very important chemicals. The theory is that the depression is caused by a chemical imbalance in the brain. The drug creates a condition where the brain reads *low* levels of norepinephrine and serotonin. The brain then initiates production of these chemicals. The point is to increase the levels of the neural transmitters, to right the imbalance and treat the depression.

While the actual subject of norepinephrine and serotonin were minor to the story (though not really, when you consider that the large norepinephrine dosages enable Markham to escape), it would have been so easy for you to make up a name for an experimental serum or whatever, for the treatment of Robert Markham, but you didn't. Many of your readers may think you did just that. But for those of us that know, thank you. You are writing some really exciting stories and doing your homework, too. I'm sure editor O'Neil doesn't mind that too much.

May your brain always be in chemical balance.

Bryan Carl Willford
9802 Forum Park #3289
Houston. TX 77036

Dear Doug, Bill, Denny and Ralph,

Ah, what to say, what to say? So much praise and so little room to do it in. Of course, I loved MOON KNIGHT #24! How could I not? Gentlemen, I rarely say this, but this issue was darn near perfect!

It posed a tough philosophical question and didn't give any clear-cut answer. There *are* no clear-cut answers. Who's to say one death is better than another? Does any person deserve to be slain by another person, no matter how truly awful he or she may be? Tough questions, questions that demand more than just a quick answer of "No death is necessary." I can't honestly say that I would stop Scarlet from killing Manny Sindone. But, then, where do you draw the line? Killing a slime-ball like Manny is one thing, but what about all of the muggers and the thieves? In their way, they are just as bad Manny. If you cross that line, then you have become like the Punisher, and in my opinion, he is just one step above the criminals he kills.

Ah well, enough of that. Thank you, Doug, for making me think about things I normally would not. Bill, these past couple of issues have really blown me away. It is really difficult to explain the feelings and moods you have created with a single picture without sounding trite. Believe me, you have become *the* artist I hold in highest regard. Period.

If you can keep up this pace, I will be happy for a long, long time. Thank you all very, very much.

Geoff Schmidt
160 Rear Grove Street
Wellesley, MA 0281

Dear Doug, Bill and the rest of the Moon Knight staff,

This letter has been brewing for a while now, but the event which triggered it is the two-page letters column in MK #21, which featured only the mildest criticisms and the very highest of praise. I admit that #'s 17 and 18 were good issues, but I felt for some time that this series is not living up to its potential. On the assumption that you are not receiving any critical mail (else surely you would have printed some), I decided it was up to me to write in.

A point of contention about MK: What is MK's motivation? Greed? (He did accept a job for payment in #21.) Guilt? (For what?) It is very difficult to tell, because almost all of your stories involve old friends, relatives and other persons near and dear to MK/Marc Spector/Jake Lockley/Steven Grant. Of course, with all of those personas running around, it is easy to understand that there would be lots of old friends (how does he find the time?) and, considering the personas, it is easy to understand how there could be lots of enemies mixed in with the friends.

But what about when there isn't an old friend? Whomever can pay? Issue #21 says so, outright. MK said he had done his homework, but he got suckered three ways to Sunday. I guess he was playing hookey. What will happen when he gets into a situation which does not have a clear-cut good-guy and bad-guy? What morals will he use to make his decisions? Who knows? I'm not sure if you two can present a situation wherein it is not clear who the good guy is. At least, not and still make it clear what the situation is.

Another problem with Spector/Grant/Lockley/MK is that he is not a character that is easy to sympathize with. He has old friends all around dying and worse and he gets angry and he usually gets revenge, but how does he grieve? You present him as being schizophrenic, but in classic schizoid cases the different personalities are quite different. Also the different personalities cope with situations differently. MK's personalities seem to be interchangeable with his clothes (in fact, his clothes seem to be all that change). Another problem with having so many cases involving friends, etc., is that the extra punch which having someone close being in danger gives a story is lost when it is overused. In my opinion, you are over-using it.

I realize that I am being very harsh on you, but if no one else is going to stand up to you, I guess that I'll just have to stand up taller. I hope you will tighten up. this new format offers opportunities to expand and develop characters and situations as never before. Take the time to do it right.

J. Kenneth Riviere
932 Austin Ave., N.E.
Atlanta, GA 30307

**There are answers to your questions, Ken, but we'd rather let your fellow readers give them. How about it people?**

Dear Denny, Doug and Bill,

Whoever said heroes are hard to find has definitely not been keeping up with the soul-searching plotlines currently being featured in the dynamic MOON KNIGHT magazine. After reading "Scarlet in Moonlight" in issue #24 and after pondering the implications of this story, I think I've discovered why this character affects me so much on a personal level. The simple answer is identification.

You see, years ago, when seventy-five cents bought a little kid six-comics-worth of enjoyment, I found the amazing world of "funny books." I soon found out that though this is the title that my parents gave to these small literary treasures, the tales that I enjoyed the most were the particularly unfunny stories featuring science fiction, horror and super heroes galore. As I got a little older and started thinking about what these super hero characters actually represented, it all became a bit vague. I knew that these heroes were the good guys, but I was also starting to suspect that the solutions to their comic-book capers were always a bit too ideal.

You may ask why such a lengthy prologue was needed to finally get around to my comments concerning the latest MOON KNIGHT offering, and the answer is just two simple words: thought provoking. Not since the appearance of "Stained Glass Scarlet" has a story in this mag moved me in such a way. What is so interesting about this character is that you have taken a theme similar to the one used in the creation of the Punisher, only in the case of Scarlet the motivations are a lot clearer. The scenes in the graveyard — of Moon Knight listening to Scarlet's reasons for her vicious death-dealing — really hit home in this day and age when criminals do seem to have more rights than honest citizens. I could never condone her methods, as I'm sure Moon Knight never did, either, but I can understand her reasons. Any hero from Captain America on down would have never let Scarlet get away, but Moon Knight did. It was a conscious, moral act on his part and under the circumstances I can strongly identify with his feelings.

In closing, I would like to say that the scene with Marlene was very affecting and sad, and it was the many thoughtful touches such as this that made this tale a genuine masterpiece. Bill, keep on doing what you're doing, because without you it just wouldn't be the same. Heroes may indeed be hard to find, but in this story I can't help but think that some type of justice has been attained.

Peace from the desert.

Bill D. Middleton
Desert Star
Clovis, NM 88101

Dear Moonsters,

What can I say? MOON KNIGHT #24 is a tour-de-force. From the first page to the last, this issue was excellent. So much for generalities, let's talk specifics.

The art left me speechless. Following the exceptional cover, we were treated to page after page of beautiful, wide-open layouts. The first dozen or so pages contain some of the most exciting images that I've seen in comics in quite a while. It is a boon to fandom that the direct-only books allow for more artistic freedom. Bill, let me take this opportunity to thank you for all the time and effort that you, quite obviously, put into this story. This is good stuff!

The story was also given the master's touch. The treatment of justice (means vs. ends, guilt vs. innocence) was handled at a very thoughtful level. "Scarlet in Moonlight" did not allow for easy answers. The story leaves the reader wondering and perhaps a bit uneasy. Unlike the recent treatment of justice in the DAREDEVIL "Angel Dust" story, you let the reader make his/her own value judgements. You did not side-step the issue at all. This is the way a story should be. Well done, Doug!

Everything else was just fine, except for the color separation on the title page. The lackadaisical application of broad swathes of red over the black areas succeeded in making the top half of the page nearly incomprehensible. From what I understand of the printing process, this probably happened after the book was out of your hands. still, I'd be interested in seeing this page in its original black-and-white form. Other than that minor complaint, I'd have to give issue an A+. Keep up the good work!

Joe Pearson
6743 Lakeworth Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46220

Dear Editor,

Absolutely beautiful! In fact, I have trouble thinking of complimentary words strong enough to describe the cover of MOON KNIGHT #24! And, not only was it gorgeous, it wasn't black-and-white!

More and more, Bill Sienkiewicz is becoming one of the most complete artists in the business. He has developed an illustrative style all his own. His approach is almost classical. Rarely does a comic artist really learn to wed classic composition and design with story telling. Sienkiewicz does just that and, consequently, each successive issue of MOON KNIGHT is a greater treat than the last! One suggestion, though: Sienkiewicz's work, as with Moon Knight himself, is best suited to the moody, almost-gritty tales of the city. The recent emphasis on Marc Spector, and the ensuing "mercenary/international" storyline, might have been nice for a change, but it should not become a staple for this book.

Specifics? MOON KNIGHT #24 brought us Scarlet Faserina, a woman who seems to be a most appropriate counter-star for Moon Knight. Although slightly exaggerated, her motivations fit the general tone that Moench maintains in this book. Hopefully, in the tradition of so many of the Spirit's "Leading Ladies," Scarlet will make return appearances. God knows, there will always be reason enough!

Once again, compliments on a most exceptional issue! And some day, I'm confident Bill Sienkiewicz will have all the acclaim he deserves! You just watch!

Mike Christiansen
704 So. Third Street
Rockford, IL 61108

Dear Marvel,

I would like to thank everyone involved with MOON KNIGHT #24. I was impressed and delighted with the issue from the start to finish and had a hard time putting it down. Issue #24 was, in my opinion, one of the finest issues to date. Not only was it exciting and realistic, but the art was, as usual, excellent. However, the most outstanding feature of MK #24 was its cover. Mr. Sienkiewicz outdid himself this time. I feel it is his best cover yet and can only hope for more excellent covers. I sincerely hope Mr. Sienkiewicz continues to do the art, as well as the covers for MOON KNIGHT. keep up the good work!

Christopher Gray
475 Sperry Drive
Tallmadge, OH 44278

Dear Knightles:

I am thrilled with the qualities of the last three issues of MOON KNIGHT (#22-24). Aside from easily being three of the five best in the book's bright history, they have been frontrunners of the Marvel line, over-shadowing such worthy books as FANTASTIC FOUR and SPIDER-WOMAN.

Judging from the sharp rise in this book's enjoyability after the dismal "Nimrod" issues, Doug and Bill have come to two important conclusions: first, that *nobody* inks Bill Sienkiewicz as well as Bill Sienkiewicz does. Second, and even more important, that MOON KNIGHT works best as a mood book — *not* an adventure book. Doug Moench is one of the finest mood writers to ever work in this field, and the same can be said for Bill; the end results of their collaborations should always be good as MOON KNIGHT #24.

I liked *everything* about MOON KNIGHT #24! From the eye-catching front cover (what coloring!) to the striking back cover ad, this book comes even closer to fulfulling the potential that this book has. A special award should also go to Christie Scheele for coloring beyond the call of duty.

I have one criticism. Bill often borrows from Neal Adams, which is really nothing to be ashamed of, since he does Adamsisms better than even Adams did. However, he should be careful not to use any of Adams's tricks before he understands them; the Moon Knight/Scarlet/Sindone scene is almost ruined by Bill's use of Adamsish slashing panels without realizing that he was making it look like Sindone was shot before Scarlet even fired at him.

I find little time to write to comics these days, and rarely are my letters so filled with praise as this one obviously is. Good luck in trying to top this latest issue — you're going to need it!

Matt Denn
Berkeley, CA

Dear Mr. Moench and Mr. Sienkiewicz,

In the past six years, I have read over 4,000 comic books. I'd just like to say that MOON KNIGHT #24 was the best out of all.

Don Chin
1951 Quaker St.
Eureka, CA 95501

Dear Denny, Doug and Bill,

"Stained Glass Scarlet" is still the best Moon Knight story to be published in this comic, and "Scarlet in Moonlight" was a masterful sequel. The heck with super-villains and international intrigue. The raw emotion, the sense of being one of the ordinary people, and the feeling that you have the possibility to do something, are where Moon Knight and Scarlet are coming from. The first story is, by far, the more emotional as it brought a sincere tear to my eye and still stands as one of the best comic stories I have ever read. This story was emotional, to be sure, and Scarlet was still Scarlet, although she had been tainted with the sin of revenge. Her role this time is an extension of what we had seen before, as she is still the actress and the nun. Unfortunately, she took upon herself the greatest role, that of being God, and thus allowing her to claim vengeance. There was still most of the previous Scarlet present, and that is why there is still a place for her in my heart. Perhaps this incident will reveal its horror to her, and that she once again recapture who she was.

And where was Moon Knight in all of this? The Lunar Avenger was unfortunately caught in the middle. He knew Scarlet for what she was and what she had been through. He knew that in many ways Scarlet was deluding herself now and he made her recognize this, but it came down to the simple fact of who was more evil, Scarlet or Manny Sindone! Thus the scene in the cemetery and in Manny's home were much to behold, as Scarlet forced Moon Knight to play the role she had taken on herself, to play God, and decide who would live and die. it was a role MK did not like to play nor want in the least, but it was a fact of existence he could not escape. I don't think that he was angry at Scarlet for forcing the role on him, nor was he angry at himself for having to play it, as I feel that he was angry at the world which allowed men such as Manny Sindone to come about and let saints such as Scarlet suffer so. If Moon Knight were a deeply religious man, I would think that his experience would cause him turmoil with his god! The final scenes wherein MK misses with his truncheon was a foregone conclusion, as he must have been going through hell before the eyes of a saint. Thanks to all concerned who let such a special story come about.

The art of Bill Sienkiewicz is masterful to say the least. The graphic detail and sense of movement meld with the mood he so adequately depicts.

MOON KNIGHT is definitely the best Marvel has to offer!

Kent A. Phenis
1321 North Meridian Street
Apartment 913
Indianapolis, IN 46202

# BULLPEN BULLETIN SPECIAL

**GOOD MORNING.**

I say that because it's 1:52 AM as I begin writing this. One of these days I hope to get caught up enough to actually write one of these columns on time... or at least during daylight hours. Oh, well...

**A MONTH AGO...**

I promised you the true origin of the EPIC Comics Group. And, here it is...

Last Spring, world-famous *MAD Magazine* cartoonist Sergio Aragones came to me with an idea. He had a concept for a series for which he wanted to retain ownership. He wondered if Marvel would be interested in publishing a series featuring characters owned by the creator and not Marvel. He said he'd want an advance payment for each issue and a percentage of the money made on the sales – a revolutionary arrangement, he thought.

I pointed out that Marvel had been doing business under *exactly* that arrangement for *over a decade!* That is precisely the arrangement we have for Conan Properties, Inc., for our Conan publications, with LucasFilms for Star Wars and Indiana Jones, and with several other people or companies for their properties. The only thing "revolutionary" was that Sergio intended to draw and write his character *himself* rather than making an agreement with us to do it for him.

No problem, I told him. Sergio left smiling, promising to return soon with a more concrete proposal.

Last time I saw Sergio, several weeks ago, he was still not finished preparing his presentation for us... but, in the meantime, several other outstanding creative people have come to us with similar propositions. Once I had my first concrete proposal, I discussed it with Mike Hobson, our Vice-President of Publishing, and we developed a publishing program around it. We made plans for several such regular publications. I suggested that we position these new titles as a separate new *line* of comics. And, I proposed that we call this new line *The EPIC Comics Group,* a name which lends the new titles some of the prestige of *EPIC Illustrated Magazine* yet clearly identifies them as comics, and furthermore, as *Marvel* comics. I also suggested that Archie Goodwin be named to edit the line because he is the editor of *EPIC Illustrated,* and because he is the best there is. Archie and Mike agreed, though Mike insisted that I consult editorially, for a while, at least, being that the whole thing was largely my idea.

That first proposal was made to us by Jim Starlin, for a series called *Dreadstar,* based upon his Metamorphosis Odyssey series in *EPIC Illustrated Magazine* and his Marvel Graphic Novel, also called *Dreadstar.* The second proposal we accepted was made by Steve Englehart for a series called *Coyote,* based upon stories he had written previously for a small, independent publisher. Steve Leialoha ultimately signed up to provide the art for that series. There are more proposals pending which I will announce once the contracts are signed, but *Dreadstar* and *Coyote* will form the vanguard of the EPIC Comics line. And that's how it came to be.

**ANOTHER PROMISE...**

I promised a couple of months ago to reveal the secret origins of John Byrne, Frank Miller and Bill Sienkiewicz... and I will... starting next month. I'd love to do it right here and now, but I can't. I have to verify a few facts first, and it's 2:32 AM right now – too late to call anyone – and this column has to be typeset first thing in the morning. Good grief! In only six hours and twenty-eight minutes I've got to be at work! Hmmm... where was I? Oh, yeah – next month for *sure!*

**AND NOW A WORD FROM THE SUBSCRIPTION DEPARTMENT...**

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**REMEMBER...**

I love it when you write to me with questions, answers, suggestions, praise and complaints. The address is:

**Jim Shooter**
**%Marvel Comics**
**387 Park Avenue South**
**New York, N.Y. 10016**

**GOODNIGHT!**

By the authority of my Editor-in-Chiefship, I pronounce these proceedings closed.

**THE HYPE BOX**

**SPIDER-WOMAN #47** — Remember Marvel staffer ANN NOCENTI's writing debut in *Bizarre Adventures #32?* Well, we — and you — liked it so much we're giving her a crack at her own series. And as for newcomer BRIAN POSTMAN's artwork — well, when you see it, we think you'll be as excited about it as we are. Thanks to these two (with a little push from editor MARK GRUENWALD) this wall-crawler is *really* coming off the wall.

**AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #16** — JOHN ROMITA JR. (pencils) and JOHN ROMITA SR. (inks) team up to introduce the all-new ***Captain Marvel!*** And wait until you see *her!*

**MARVEL GRAPHIC NOVEL #4: THE NEW MUTANTS** — Guessing time is over! Now, at last, see Professor Xavier's new team of mutants for yourself! CHRIS CLAREMONT and BOB McLEOD did the honors. All you have to do is enjoy!

**THE MIGHTY MARVEL CHECKLIST**

- ☐ **MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE #94** — The **Thing, Power Man** and **Iron Fist!**
- ☐ **TEAM AMERICA #7**
- ☐ **SPIDER-WOMAN #47**
- ☐ **DAZZLER #22**
- ☐ **KA-ZAR #21**
- ☐ **DAREDEVIL #189**
- ☐ **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #235**
- ☐ **CAPTAIN AMERICA #276**
- ☐ **THOR #326**
- ☐ **MICRONAUTS #48**
- ☐ **GHOST RIDER #75**
- ☐ **MOON KNIGHT #26**
- ☐ **DR. STRANGE #56** — Art by PAUL SMITH and TERRY AUSTIN
- ☐ **WOLVERINE (Limited Series) #4**
- ☐ **INCREDIBLE HULK #278**
- ☐ **AVENGERS #226**
- ☐ **X-MEN #162**— Meet *Binary!* DAVE COCKRUM'S farewell issue.
- ☐ **CONAN #141**
- ☐ **MARVEL TALES #146** — Reprints *Amazing Spider-Man #7,* by STAN LEE and STEVE DITKO.
- ☐ **ROM #37**
- ☐ **POWER-MAN/IRON FIST #88**
- ☐ **VISION/SCARLET WITCH (Limited Series) #4**
- ☐ **G.I. JOE #6**
- ☐ **FANTASTIC FOUR #249**
- ☐ **MARVEL TEAM-UP #124** — **Spider-Man** and **Beast!**
- ☐ **IRON MAN #165**
- ☐ **PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #73**
- ☐ **DEFENDERS #114**
- ☐ **STAR WARS #66**
- ☐ **MASTER OF KUNG FU #119**
- ☐ **WHAT IF #35** — "What If the **Fantastic Four** Had Not Gained Their Powers?" and "What If **Nova** Hadn't Lost His Powers?"
- ☐ **HERCULES (Limited Series) #2**

**MARVEL MAGAZINES**

- ☐ **CRAZY #91**
- ☐ **THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #82**

**MARVEL SPECIAL EDITIONS**

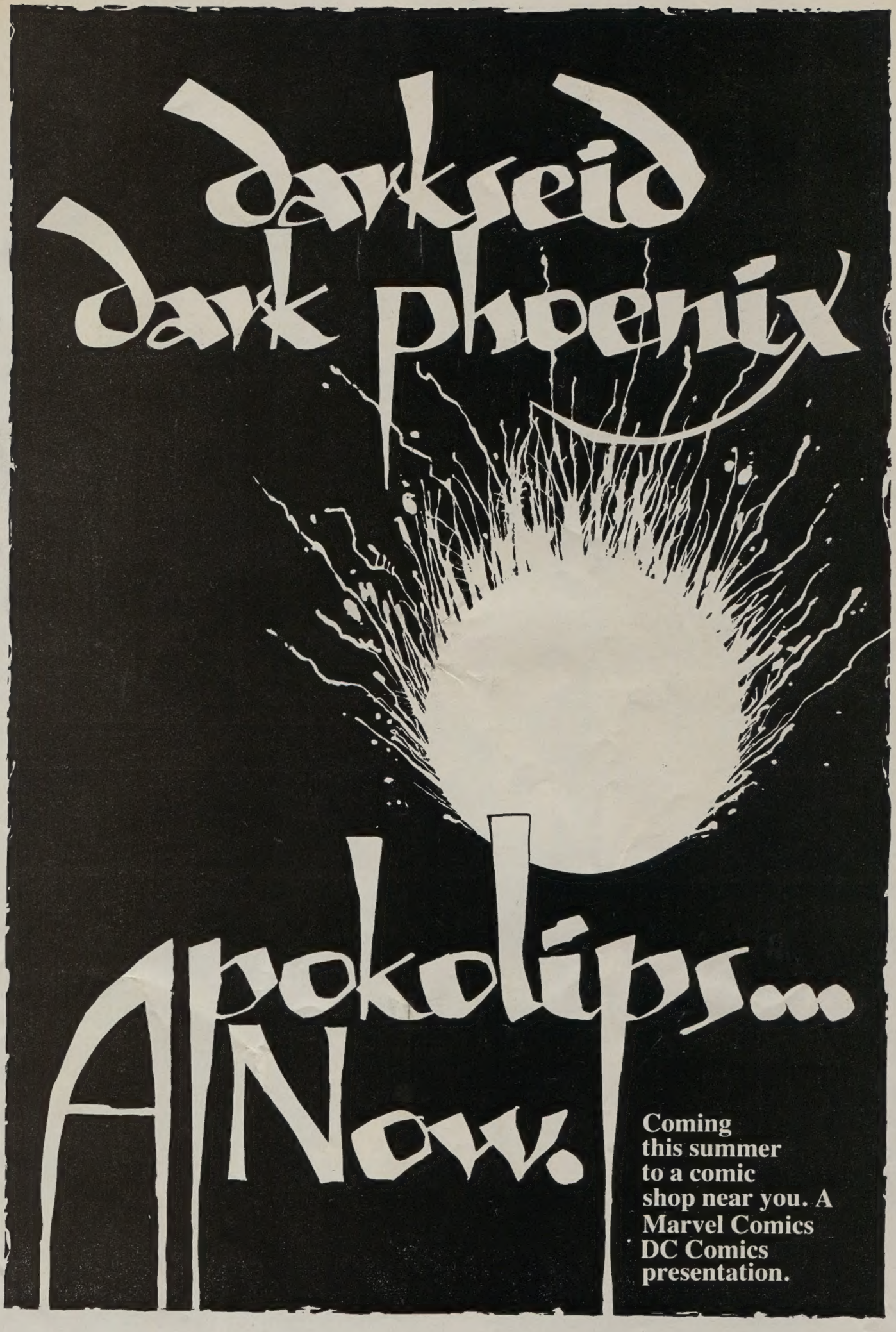
- ☐ **CONAN SPECIAL EDITION**— Reprinting the classic *"Red Nails"* by ROY THOMAS and BARRY SMITH, plus ROBERT E. HOWARD's poem *Cimmeria,* illustrated by barry smith. *All-new* cover by BARRY SMITH.
- ☐ **X-MEN SPECIAL EDITION #1**— Re-presenting the first appearance of the New X-Men from **Giant-Sized X-Men #1.** Plus, an **all-new** twelve-page featurette starring Kitty Pryde by CHRIS CLAREMONT and PAUL SMITH.
- ☐ **WARLOCK #1**— Beginning the re-presentation of JIM STARLIN's classic series.

**MARVEL ANNUALS**

- ☐ **IRON MAN ANNUAL #5**
- ☐ **AVENGERS ANNUAL #11** — The **Avengers** vs. the **Defenders!**

**MARVEL GRAPHIC NOVELS**

- ☐ **#3: THE NEW MUTANTS** — See Hype Box.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HE'S

DEAD.

**MOON KNIGHT #27.**
On sale
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